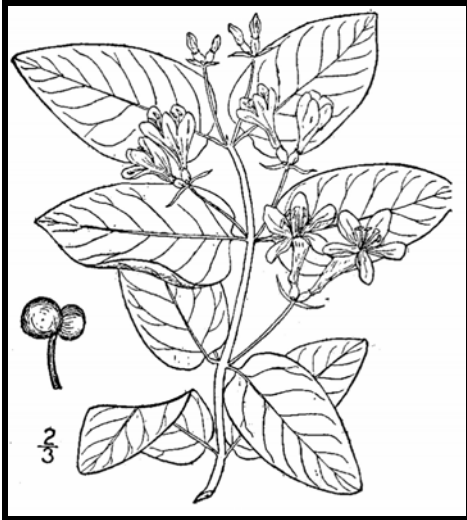


Methods for Disposing Non-Native Invasive Plants

Prepared by the Invasives Species Outreach Group, volunteers interested in helping people control invasive plants. Assistance provided by the Piscataquog Land Conservancy and the NH Invasives Species Committee. Edited by Karen Bennett, Extension Forestry Professor and Specialist.



Tatarian honeysuckle

Lonicera tatarica

USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions*. Vol. 3: 282.

Non-native invasive plants crowd out natives in natural and managed landscapes. They cost taxpayers billions of dollars each year from lost agricultural and forest crops, decreased biodiversity, impacts to natural resources and the environment, and the cost to control and eradicate them.

Invasive plants grow well even in less than desirable conditions such as sandy soils along roadsides, shaded wooded areas, and in wetlands. In ideal conditions, they grow and spread even faster. There are many ways to remove these non-native invasives, but once removed, care is needed to dispose the removed plant material so the plants don't grow where disposed.

Knowing how a particular plant reproduces indicates its method of spread and helps determine

the appropriate disposal method. Most are spread by seed and are dispersed by wind, water, animals, or people. Some reproduce by vegetative means from pieces of stems or roots forming new plants. Others spread through both seed and vegetative means.

Because movement and disposal of viable plant parts is restricted (see NH Regulations), viable invasive parts can't be brought to most transfer stations in the state. Check with your transfer station to see if there is an approved, designated area for invasives disposal. This fact sheet gives recommendations for rendering plant parts non-viable.

Control of invasives is beyond the scope of this fact sheet. For information about control visit www.nhinvasives.org or contact your UNH Cooperative Extension office.

New Hampshire Regulations

Prohibited invasive species shall only be disposed of in a manner that renders them nonliving and nonviable. (Agr. 3802.04)

No person shall collect, transport, import, export, move, buy, sell, distribute, propagate or transplant any living and viable portion of any plant species, which includes all of their cultivars and varieties, listed in Table 3800.1 of the New Hampshire prohibited invasive species list. (Agr 3802.01)

How and When to Dispose of Invasives?

To prevent seed from spreading remove invasive plants before seeds are set (produced). Some plants continue to grow, flower and set seed even after pulling or cutting. Seeds can remain viable in the ground for many years. If the plant has flowers or seeds, place the flowers and seeds in a heavy plastic bag “head first” at the weeding site and transport to the disposal site. The following are general descriptions of disposal methods. See the chart for recommendations by species.

Burning: Large woody branches and trunks can be used as firewood or burned in piles. For outside burning, a written fire permit from the local forest fire warden is required unless the ground is covered in snow. Brush larger than 5 inches in diameter can’t be burned. Invasive plants with easily airborne seeds like black swallow-wort with mature seed pods (indicated by their brown color) shouldn’t be burned as the seeds may disperse by the hot air created by the fire.

Bagging (solarization): Use this technique with softer-tissue plants. Use heavy black or clear plastic bags (contractor grade), making sure that no parts of the plants poke through. Allow the bags to sit in the sun for several weeks and on dark pavement for the best effect.

Tarping and Drying: Pile material on a sheet of plastic and cover with a tarp, fastening the tarp to the ground and monitoring it for escapes. Let the material dry for several weeks, or until it is clearly nonviable.

Chipping: Use this method for woody plants that don’t reproduce vegetatively.

Burying: This is risky, but can be done with watchful diligence. Lay thick plastic in a deep pit before placing the cut up plant material in the hole. Place the material away from the edge of the plastic before covering it with more heavy plastic. Eliminate as much air as possible and toss in soil to weight down the material in the pit. Note that the top of the buried material should be at least three feet underground. Japanese knotweed should be at least 5 feet underground!

Drowning: Fill a large barrel with water and place soft-tissue plants in the water. Check after a few weeks and look for rotted plant material (roots, stems, leaves, flowers). Well-rotted plant material may be composted. A word of caution- seeds may still be viable after using this method. Do this before seeds are set. This method isn’t used often. Be prepared for an awful stink!

Composting: Invasive plants can take root in compost. Don’t compost any invasives unless you know there is no viable (living) plant material left. Use one of the above techniques (bagging, tarping, drying, chipping, or drowning) to render the plants nonviable before composting. Closely examine the plant before composting and avoid composting seeds.






Japanese knotweed
Polygonum cuspidatum
USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database /
Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions*. Vol. 1: 676.

Be diligent looking for seedlings for years in areas where removal and disposal took place.

Suggested Disposal Methods for Non-Native Invasive Plants

This table provides information concerning the disposal of removed invasive plant material. If the infestation is treated with herbicide and left in place, these guidelines don't apply. Don't bring invasives to a local transfer station, unless there is a designated area for their disposal, or they have been rendered non-viable. This listing includes wetland and upland plants from the New Hampshire Prohibited Invasive Species List. The disposal of aquatic plants isn't addressed.

Woody Plants	Method of Reproducing	Methods of Disposal
Norway maple <i>(Acer platanoides)</i> European barberry <i>(Berberis vulgaris)</i> Japanese barberry <i>(Berberis thunbergii)</i> autumn olive <i>(Elaeagnus umbellata)</i> burning bush <i>(Euonymus alatus)</i> Morrow's honeysuckle <i>(Lonicera morrowii)</i> Tatarian honeysuckle <i>(Lonicera tatarica)</i> showy bush honeysuckle <i>(Lonicera x bella)</i> common buckthorn <i>(Rhamnus cathartica)</i> glossy buckthorn <i>(Frangula alnus)</i>	Fruit and Seeds 	Prior to fruit/seed ripening Seedlings and small plants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pull or cut and leave on site with roots exposed. No special care needed. Larger plants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use as firewood. ▪ Make a brush pile. ▪ Chip. ▪ Burn.
		After fruit/seed is ripe Don't remove from site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Burn. ▪ Make a covered brush pile. ▪ Chip once all fruit has dropped from branches. ▪ Leave resulting chips on site and monitor.
oriental bittersweet <i>(Celastrus orbiculatus)</i> multiflora rose <i>(Rosa multiflora)</i>	Fruits, Seeds, Plant Fragments 	Prior to fruit/seed ripening Seedlings and small plants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pull or cut and leave on site with roots exposed. No special care needed. Larger plants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make a brush pile. ▪ Burn.
		After fruit/seed is ripe Don't remove from site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Burn. ▪ Make a covered brush pile. ▪ Chip – only after material has fully dried (1 year) and all fruit has dropped from branches. Leave resulting chips on site and monitor.

Non-Woody Plants	Method of Reproducing	Methods of Disposal
<p>garlic mustard (<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>)</p> <p>spotted knapweed (<i>Centaurea maculosa</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sap of related knapweed can cause skin irritation and tumors. Wear gloves when handling. <p>black swallow-wort (<i>Cynanchum nigrum</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May cause skin rash. Wear gloves and long sleeves when handling. <p>pale swallow-wort (<i>Cynanchum rossicum</i>)</p> <p>giant hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can cause major skin rash. Wear gloves and long sleeves when handling. <p>dame's rocket (<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>)</p> <p>perennial pepperweed (<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>)</p> <p>purple loosestrife (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>)</p> <p>Japanese stilt grass (<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>)</p> <p>mile-a-minute weed (<i>Polygonum perfoliatum</i>)</p>	<p>Fruits and Seeds</p> 	<p>Prior to flowering</p> <p>Depends on scale of infestation</p> <p>Small infestation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pull or cut plant and leave on site with roots exposed. <p>Large infestation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pull or cut plant and pile. (You can pile onto or cover with plastic sheeting). ▪ Monitor. Remove any re-sprouting material. <hr/> <p>During and following flowering</p> <p>Do nothing until the following year or remove flowering heads and bag and let rot.</p> <p>Small infestation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pull or cut plant and leave on site with roots exposed. <p>Large infestation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pull or cut plant and pile remaining material. (You can pile onto plastic or cover with plastic sheeting). ▪ Monitor. Remove any re-sprouting material.
<p>common reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>)</p> <p>Japanese knotweed (<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i>)</p> <p>Bohemian knotweed (<i>Polygonum x bohemicum</i>)</p>	<p>Fruits, Seeds, Plant Fragments</p> <p>Primary means of spread in these species is by plant parts. Although all care should be given to preventing the dispersal of seed during control activities, the presence of seed doesn't materially influence disposal activities.</p>	<p>Small infestation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bag all plant material and let rot. ▪ Never pile and use resulting material as compost. ▪ Burn. <p>Large infestation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remove material to unsuitable habitat (dry, hot and sunny or dry and shaded location) and scatter or pile. ▪ Monitor and remove any sprouting material. ▪ Pile, let dry, and burn.

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